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to the proper authorities. Children are found who are not in school simply because they are not well enough to go. A case like this is reported to the Nurses' Settlement, and they send him to the country for a few weeks, where he is "built up," and in a short time returns robust and ready to begin the studies which were a drag when he left school. Children from ten to fourteen years of age are sometimes kept home from school to look after younger children where one of the parents is dead and the other has to go out to earn enough to keep them together. Such cases are helped by the charity organizations and the child returned to school.

The chief object the nurse has in view is to help to keep the children in school, and as the great majority are taken from school at fourteen years of age and sent to work, it will readily be seen how essential it is that not a day should be lost.

Instances have come under my own notice where children have been kept out of school for weeks with a slight eczema on the face or head, and after a few days' careful treatment have been returned to school.

By March 1 it is hoped to have a staff of twenty-five or more nurses, and about one hundred schools will be taken up.

The nurse who enters upon this work without the spirit of doing the greatest good she can for the public will find it more of a burden than a pleasure. It requires women who feel the needs of the children and their parents and who have had experience with the different phases of nursing. The work is hard, and is only lightened by the amount of cheerfulness the individual nurse carries into it with her.

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE NURSE *

By ALICE I. TWITCHELL

Superintendent S. R. Smith Infirmary, Staten Island

I HAVE been asked to give my idea upon discipline, and at the same time was asked if I believed in military discipline in our training-schools for nurses, and I assure you that I do most decidedly, but the believing in and desiring it are very different and much easier than obtaining such discipline.

Promptness in coming on and going off duty, to meals, time off, and obeying rules generally regarding practical work I have no difficulty with; but my nurses have two hours off every day, and it is a well-understood fact that one hour is to be devoted to study and the

* Read at the meeting of the American Society of Superintendents of Training-Schools for Nurses, Detroit, 1902.

other to recreation. The latter hour, I am sure, is always satisfactorily employed, but with very few exceptions that extra hour is not devoted to study, except the day before, or perhaps two days before, class, then one will see text-books very much in evidence, the prevailing idea seeming to be that some added information may be acquired by absorption.

Now I would like some superintendent who is satisfied with the amount of studying that her nurses do, and with their standing in class and general interest and understanding of their theoretical work, to tell us how she has accomplished such a result, for my experience has been that I get good practical work done much more easily than equally good theoretical work.

The idea of each nurse being entirely self-governing, and that we shall trust to her honor and judgment in all things, I am sure would prove a failure with me and any class of nurses with whom I have ever had to deal. Another reason why I fully approve of military discipline is that the women who are taking up the work in this age seem, as a general thing, to imagine that they know much better how to manage the work than their superior officers. Juniors criticise their seniors, seniors know so much better how to run the wards than the head nurses, while I have no doubt that the head nurses think they could manage the school and conduct the affairs of the school and hospitals better than those in charge. It seems to be an open question with some nurses and most internes where the line should be drawn as to relations and communications necessary to the performance of their duties in the hospital.

If our medical schools would introduce a branch of hospital ethics into their curriculum for prospective internes, I think it would be a great help to us heads of hospitals.

I heard of one school where the superintendent allowed the internes and nurses to mingle and go out together as much as they wished, providing that they assured her that they were in earnest, and were not merely flirting.

I have never tried that plan, and hardly think I will until I feel that it would prove satisfactory, for I cannot see how there could be the desired dignity and attention to duty in the wards if this were allowed.

I have been very forcibly impressed during the past year or more with the idea that if the members of our schools, while in training, were sufficiently disciplined by a superintendent who would set an example of cool, dignified, unbiassed judgment, and expect the same from her pupils, they might not feel inclined after graduation to express themselves in private, in public, and in our nursing periodicals quite

as forcibly and regardlessly of facts and the feelings of others as some have been inclined to do in the past.

I expect nurses to be self-contained and self-governed, to rely upon themselves in emergency, not to be affected by trifles, "to keep their heads" under all circumstances, and take the initiative in managing their wards, in instructing the nurses under them, in improving things in every way possible, at the same time to realize that rules are made to be observed, and not to be broken.

DISCUSSION

MISS DOCK.—The secretary might say she had quite a little trouble in getting up a group of papers on discipline. It was thought it would be a good plan to have four or five short papers on discipline, and the wish of the council was to bring out the different ideas as to discipline which are held in the different schools. We wanted some from very strict disciplinarians and some from those who believe in practising discipline more by suggestion,—that is, getting people to think out their own ideas of discipline,—and your secretary will tell you in confidence, without mentioning any names, that she wrote many letters, and that almost every one declined. That is the reason this group of papers is incomplete. The criticism which I hear now, being outside the training-school, is that the discipline of the training-schools tends to repress individuality. I hear that criticism made sometimes quite severely. It is said that nurses in training are intimidated and are afraid to be natural; that individuality and originality are repressed instead of being brought out. I do not think that is altogether true, though there may be some truth in it, and a criticism I hear very often from people in general is that nurses are lacking in initiative when they get outside of the hospital. That is another very difficult point, because we all know it would not do to have every nurse exercise her free initiative in the hospital, for we would have from seventy-five to two hundred different initiatives being acted on at once with disastrous results, yet it seems important that outside of the hospitals trained women should have a certain amount of independent judgment. Those are the puzzles in the case.

MISS DELANO.—This is a subject that has interested me for a great many years, and I believe that a defect of training-schools in the past has been to turn out a set of machines, and it is a question that has for a long time seemed to be acted upon from a mistaken point of view. Educators all over the world are training children along different lines, and why we should conduct schools for women and expect to turn them out all on the same mould, with exactly the same ideas, warranted to run a certain number of hours a day and sleep a certain number of hours a day, regardless of that woman's individuality, seems to me a tremendous mistake; and yet I think training-schools for years have worked on those lines. Just how we are to get ourselves in line to do anything else I do not know, but it seems to me we have made a mistake in the past. We are supposed to have self-reliant, educated, well-brought-up women in our schools, and it seems to me we should find a way of dealing with them a little differently. I confess I have not found the way, but I think we ought to work on that line. I would like to hear from some of the others.

MISS TWITCHELL.—I would like to ask the president, as I understand she has the eight-hour system, if she succeeds in getting a great deal more study

from the nurses owing to their having those extra hours off duty. Is your theoretical work more satisfactory than before?

THE PRESIDENT.—The chair will unhesitatingly state it is more satisfactory. There is more time devoted to it, and a higher standard of theoretical work has been done since we have adopted it.

MRS. FOURNIER.—I would like to express my ideas on that line. Our system was changed three years ago to the eight-hour system. At that time the school was a two-years' school; it is now three. At the first examination after the hours were changed every examiner asked me what had happened, that my nurses passed such a high grade of examination, that they passed as good an examination as the average medical student. I think that proves that they do better work under the eight-hour system.

MISS AYERS.—I would like to hear from some of the superintendents on the question of misdemeanors, what penalties they impose for the breaking of the various rules of conduct and of discipline?

THE PRESIDENT.—The chair is very glad that question has been raised, because it is a practical question, and she also would like to know if there are any codes of penalties in training-schools under the charge of superintendents who are here, whether it has ever seemed advisable to adopt such codes.

MISS ALLEERTON.—It seems to me that right here is where the treatment of a nurse as an individual comes in. I think that no two nurses are alike in disposition and no two can be punished alike; what would be punishment for one would not be for another. And there are some nurses so conscientious and so sensitive that you have to handle them very carefully. There are others who are so perfectly indifferent to what they have done or the result it brings that some very severe measure must be taken. At least, I have found that so in my treatment of nurses.

MISS DOCK.—There is one punishment that is used sometimes—I don't remember whether I ever inflicted it myself or not; I think now it is quite a wrong thing, based on a wrong principle, because it humiliates the nurse publicly and does not do any good: that is, taking away a nurse's cap for the time being. I have heard of that being done.

MISS TWITCHELL.—In reply to the president's question as to whether there are any printed rules, one of our rules is that the superintendent shall dismiss all insubordinate or incompetent persons, reporting the same to the Board of Trustees at the next meeting. That is a printed rule with us.

THE PRESIDENT.—The chair would furthermore like to know if there are any other training-school superintendents who have the power of dismissing pupils.

MISS ALLEERTON.—I will say that we have the power of suspending a pupil and keeping her off duty,—not dismissing her, but keeping her in the house until the matter is adjusted by the training-school board. I myself do not care for the authority to dismiss a pupil. I would rather that the pupil's side of the story should always be heard, and that the board should share with me the responsibility of dismissal.

MISS AYERS.—Another thing I would like to ask is, after six or eight or ten months, perhaps, when it is found on further observation that the pupil is not the proper material for a nurse, how the different superintendents manage to get rid of them without difficulty. We all know there are pupils whose conduct is excellent, and yet who have not proved themselves good nurses as they get farther along; or perhaps they have the mental but not the moral qualifica-

tions. Of course, those are more easily disposed of, but I should like to get the opinion of some of the superintendents on the other matters.

MISS GRISWOLD.—I have had some experience on that line, and I always try to make an appeal to the pupil herself, and have usually been able to get her interested in some other kind of work. In some cases I advise millinery.

MISS BANFIELD.—I am at present in charge of a small training-school. I am a graduate of a hospital of over two hundred nurses, and I think I may say that our discipline was strict, decidedly so,—military; and I did not notice amongst my over two hundred fellow-workers, a great many of whom I afterwards had charge of, that the training had killed their individuality. If they had it, it came out; in fact, it could not help but come out. But it does seem rather as it were, first of all, a question of the superintendent as much as the pupil. If you have a superintendent whom you can trust, the best way, it seems to me, is to trust her, and she will bring out, or should certainly if she is fit for her position, all that is best in her pupils in one way or another. As Miss Allerton said, I do not see how any of us can be expected to give the golden rule in training-schools. You get the best out of one woman in one way and out of another in another; some require military discipline and some require greater individual sympathy, and, of course, the difficulty with us is to give this individual sympathy to our pupils. After all, the pupil is only in the hospital for three years, and when she gets outside she can be just as individual as she pleases. We all know how much that is: it is not very much. So, really, I would say that I think we are not overdoing it. We do the best we can with the pupils and we know we have to have certain rules. We have all been pupils ourselves; it is not as if we did not know what it was like; and we have all had to obey rules we did not want to obey and to turn out our lights at times when we wanted them to burn. I have often been told by probationers that my rules are too rigid,—they do not seem to be afraid of me, and it affords me a great deal of amusement at times. But do we not all think that we have discipline in our schools? I do not think we have to lay at our own doors very much of the stifling of individuality. The person who cannot obey, I have never yet found can command.

MISS GROSS.—I think we all agree that in the hospitals it is necessary to have discipline among the pupils for the sake of the reputation of the hospital. There is nothing that affects the hospital and its good name so much as poor pupils,—that is, pupils who are not doing good work,—and for that reason we must have good discipline there. If one pupil does something that is entirely wrong in the hospital, it will be told by the patient with whom it has occurred and repeated all over the city, and she will do more harm than forty other pupils who are doing good work. We must control our pupils, and it seems to me the best way we can do it is by love. If we can teach our pupils to love us, if they are at all affectionate, you can appeal to their sympathy and treat them as if they were your younger sisters, younger in the same profession. Let them know that you are interested in them and that you want them to follow you. Let them know it is going to hurt you if they do otherwise. But you will find a few you cannot control even in that way, and then I think for those few who are left you must establish a rigid discipline. As Miss Allerton has already said, you cannot adopt any code that will appeal to those few who need the rigid discipline. What is punishment to one is not punishment to others, and one must study the individual pupil in order to know what is the need for that one.